

# Prabuddha Bharata

उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत



प्राण्य वराशिबोधत ।

*Katha Upan. I. iii. 2*

Arise! Awake! And stop not till the Goal is reached.

—Swami Vivekananda.

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CONVERSATIONS AND DIALOGUES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA,

( RECORDED BY A DISCIPLE, )

XV.

[ Place—*The rented Math at Belur.*

Time—*February 1898.*

Subjects: *References to Swamiji's boyhood and youth and a Vision he had in those days.—About certain supernatural powers experienced in America, in which he felt as if someone was pushing a mass of thoughts for lectures from within. ]*

Swamiji has removed the Math from Alambar to Nilambar Babu's garden at Belur. Though the inmates have removed to this house yet things have not yet been all put in order. Swamiji has been very glad to come to these new premises. He said to the disciple when the latter came, "See how the Ganges flows by and what a nice building! I like this place. This is the ideal kind of place for a Math." It was then afternoon.

In the evening the disciple saw the Swamiji in the upper story, and the talk went on, on various topics. There was no one else in the room. The disciple rose now and then to prepare tobacco for Swamiji, and in the course of varied con-

versation wanted to know about Swamiji's boyhood days. Swamiji began to say, "From my very boyhood I was a dare-devil sort of fellow. Otherwise do you think I could make a tour round the world without a single copper in my pocket?"

In boyhood Swamiji had a great predilection for hearing the chanting of the Ramayana by professional singers. Wherever such chanting would take place in the neighbourhood, he would attend it leaving sport and all. Swamiji related how, while listening to the Ramayana, on some days, he would be so deeply engrossed in it as to forget all about home, and would have no such idea as that it was late at night and he must return home,

and so forth. One day during the chant he heard that the monkey-god Hanuman lived in banana orchards. Forthwith he was so much convinced that when the chant was over he did not make for home straight that night but loitered in a banana orchard close to his house, with the hope of catching sight of Hanuman, till it was very late in the night.

Among the personages of the Ramayana Swamiji had an unbounded regard for Hanumana. Even after he had become a Sannyasin he would now and then go into raptures over the topic of Hanumana, whenever it arose, and often thought of placing a stone image of Mahavira (Hanuman) at the Math.

During his school-days he used to pass the day-time only in playing and gamboling with his mates, and study at night, bolting the doors. And none could know when he prepared his lessons.

\* \* \* \*

The disciple asked, "Did you see any visions, Sir, during your school-days?"

Swamiji.— While at school, one night I was meditating within closed doors and had a fairly deep concentration of mind. How long I meditated in that way, I cannot say. It was over, and I still kept my seat, when from the southern wall of that room, a luminous figure stepped out and stood in my front. There was a wonderful radiance on its visage, yet there seemed to be no play of emotion on it. It was the figure of a Sannyasin absolutely calm, shaven headed, and staff and Kamandalu (a Sannyasin's wooden water-bowl) in hand. He gazed at me for some time, and seemed as if he would address me. I too gazed on at him in speechless wonder. Then a kind of fright seized me, I opened the door and hurried out of the room.

Then it struck me that it was foolish of me to run away like that, that perhaps he might say something to me. But I have never met that figure since. Many a time and often have I thought that if again I saw him, I would no more be afraid but would speak to him. But I met him no more.

Disciple.— Did you think on the matter afterwards?

Swamiji.— Yes, but I could find no clue to its solution. I now think it was the Lord Buddha whom I saw.

After a short pause Swamiji said, "When the mind is purified, when one is free from the attachment to lust and gold, one sees lots of visions, most wonderful ones! But one should not pay heed to them. The aspirant cannot advance further if he sets his mind constantly on that. Haven't you heard Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'countless jewels lie uncared for in the outer courts of my beloved Lord's sanctum.' We must come face to face with the Atman, what is the use of setting one's mind on vagaries like those?"

After saying these words Swamiji sat silent for a while, lost in thought over something. He then resumed:—

"Well, while I was in America I had certain wonderful powers developed in me. By looking into people's eyes I could fathom in a trice the contents of their minds. The workings of everybody's mind would be patent to me, like a fruit on the palm of one's hand. And to some I used to give out these things, and of those to whom I communicated these many would become my disciples; whereas those who came to mix with me with some ulterior motives, would not, on coming across this power of mine, even venture into my presence any more.

"When I began lecturing in Chicago and other cities, I had to deliver every week some twelve or fifteen or even more lectures at times. This excessive strain on the body and mind exhausted me to a degree. I seemed to run short of subjects for lectures, and was anxious where to find new topics for the morrow's lecture. New thoughts seemed altogether scarce. One day, after the lecture I lay thinking of what means to adopt next. The thought induced a sort of slumber and in that state I heard as if somebody stood by me and was lecturing; many new ideas and new veins of thought, which I had scarcely heard or thought of in my life. On awaking I remembered them and reproduced them in my lecture. I cannot enumerate how often this phenomenon took

place. Many, many days did I hear such lectures while lying in bed. Sometimes the lecture would be delivered in such a loud voice that the inmates of adjacent rooms would hear the sound and ask me the next day, 'with whom Swamiji, were you talking so loudly last night?' I used to avoid the question somehow. Ah, it was a wonderful phenomenon."

The disciple was wonder-struck at Swamiji's words and after thinking deeply on the matter said, "Sir, then you yourself must have lectured like that in your subtle body, and sometimes it would find an echo in the gross body."

Swamiji listened and replied, "Well, may be."

(To be continued)!

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## OCCASIONAL NOTES.

THE first original sin, if there be one, is the idea of self-identification with the body. From this one basic idea flow as necessary corollaries, the whole host of our ideas which constitute the nexus of relations by which the Infinite Spirit or soul of man finds himself entangled in the bondage of the world. It is the pre-supposition of all our thinking, it enters into all human calculations, dominates our whole mental horizon and determines all its hopes and fears. Whatever ministers to its enjoyment fills us with joy, and whatever takes away from it makes us immediately miserable; and the body and its happiness enters a good deal into all our imaginings of future happiness. If we could imagine a place where bodily enjoyments do not fill a great part it will certainly be a very uninhabitable, barren

world for us. To some the consciousness is so much pent in within the consciousness of the body, that they cannot even contemplate their being separate from the body without fright and the loss of it means utter blankness to them.

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But the moment we accept the Self as the centre of our being, there is a thorough transvaluation of our outlook on life. The world around us, then, instead of giving suggestions of dead matter, becomes replete with suggestions of the Spirit and instead of inhabiting a dead world and moving among lifeless objects, we begin to live in a world which is realised to be as mind-born. One of the first effects of purification of soul from the thralldom of matter is seen to be in an awakening of our faculties, and objects of

sense which had previously conveyed no meaning to us are seen as aflame with intelligence, pregnant with suggestions which carry the mind to a wholly different region.

All poets must have reached a state of mind similar to this. Their world was not pent in within the consciousness of the body, but by the very refinement of their feelings and power of emotion they lifted themselves above the body and reached to expansive planes of vision; instead of regarding the body and adjuncts of the body as the Self and the rest of the world as "not-self" they have broken this artificial barrier and been in communion with the whole, of which they have felt themselves to be parts. Much of Wordsworth's poetry breathes of this holy communion with nature; to him the "meanest flower that blows have given rise to thoughts too deep for words;" and all his days have been "bound together by natural piety."

If we are to be spiritual, we have deliberately to take birth in a world of thought. The whole of thinking has to be replaced by a new order of thinking. The *Vichara* (reasoning) arising from true *Viveka* (discrimination), that the Self is thoroughly separate from the body, and unaffected by the deficiencies of the latter, has to be impressed on the consciousness by repeated thinking. "न ह वै सशरीरस्य सतः प्रिया-प्रियवैतवहति सति।" "For the embodied being there is no freedom from pleasure and pain." Do not we see how often our thinking and imaginings are based on the presupposition that we are body first and a Soul afterwards, and that which advances the interests of the body is accepted with avidity, and the interests of the Soul are ignored or subordinated to it? This

has to be reversed. We have to regard ourselves as Spirit first and body afterwards, as souls manipulating a body for the interests of the Soul; we have also to regard our fellow-beings as spirits, souls, and conform our relations and attitude to them accordingly and ignore, discard, or altogether renounce all relations and ties which have the least taint of materiality in it.

This attitude of mind will greatly improve our human and social relations and instead of binding us fast in chains and slavery to those whom we affect to love it will give rise to the bliss of non-attachment in all our human relations. It will also deepen our relations and love. Our feelings and emotion for those we love will not lose anything in intensity, it will increase a hundredfold, yet it will not make us selfish, or attached to our objects of love. For all relation in which the body is involved is sure to vanish after a time and always results in a reaction; but it is the spiritual relations alone that lives and grows too in course of time.

"अशरीरं वाव सन्नं प्रियाम्रिये न स्पृशतः।" "For the disembodied existence there is no tainting by pleasure and pain," so says the Sruti. So it is possible by *atma-nigraha* (Self-restraint) to gradually draw back our consciousness which is spread over the whole body and to concentrate it on the super-physical Self or Atman of man. In that is Freedom, the advent of all immortality and the end of all death. This is compassed in different ways in the different Yogas. The *Jnani* by his philosophical reasoning and with his powerful will as the weapon tears away his consciousness from the body and masses it in the Self; by his mind he denies the pain

and pleasure of the body, his brain refuses to record them, though to the outward nerves and senses it might be intense anguish or superlative pleasure. The Bhakta by intensely loving and adoring an Ideal Abstract Being, God, and as his attention concentrates on Him, the physical pain and pleasure of his body is drowned in the high flood-tide of his spiritual emotion and love for God. The Yogi manipulates powers in the different centres, and as his mind rises to higher and higher centres or planes, the consciousness of the lower ones is inhibited and when he rises to the thousand-petalled (Sahasra) centre in the brain, he feels himself thoroughly

dissociated from the body and immersed in the effulgent radiance of his own Swarupa (True Self).

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Religion ought to be able to give us the conquest of the Flesh. So long as this does not come, we are bond-slaves to Nature, slave to a little bit of food, a little bit of pleasure or pain, trying our best to nourish, and preserve this bundle of flesh and bones which anything can scatter to pieces in a moment. Religion will free us from this incubus of body-consciousness, this haunting fear of the loss of this "fleshly tabernacle."

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### GOD AND THE DIVERSE WORLD.

THE question is asked, why in the reign of an all-powerful and just God there should be so much disparity of conditions, such apparent hardships, one born with a healthy frame and vigour of mind and in circumstances which help him to grow up into a noble character, while another, the opposite, with an indifferent endowment of the qualities of head and heart and born in circumstances which repress the expression of the highest in Him, but only tend to emphasise all the weak and mean elements of his being. However much we may push the question backwards and forwards, by bringing in the operation of Karma, previous work, or of reward for sufferings, hereafter, the real crux of the question is not destroyed. For the question remains ultimately, why should there be present suffering and disparity of conditions leaving aside all questions of future reward; that is injustice enough to taint the character of God, the

Paragon and Prototype of all human virtues. The idea of future rewards or happiness compensating present suffering, or present disparity, the effect of past works may satisfy to some extent our human sense of justice but with regard to God, the fountain of all justice, it may be well be asked why under His dispensation shall good be reached through evil, shall present suffering be undergone for future happiness—why, this injustice of method?

The answer to the question will depend greatly on our conception of God. If it is One who has created the world independently out of pre-existing matter completely under his control, just as a Kumbhakar fashions a pot, if he is an anthropomorphic God only who by his fiat produces this world and Jivas and rules the world just as a high potentate rules the kingdom, if God, Soul and Nature are all separate entities, then there is no getting away from

the objection. He is arbitrarily pleased and displeased with people. We are separate entities from God, there is nothing common in substance between Him and us, there is nothing to bind Him with us but we are completely under His control, the relation between Him and us is between the ruler and ruled and our only hope is to try and curry favour with Him and whoever succeeds in that becomes his favourite, enjoying exclusive privileges. Such a conception of God never solves the problem of misery and suffering but only intensifies it. In some crude dualistic sects such questions will not be allowed to be asked but stifled in the asking, the way they propose is to seek by praise and otherwise to propitiate Him and thereby get saved.

The Vedantic conception of God is not that of an extra-cosmic who rules the world from without. He is a God immanent in the universe. It is He who has become everything. The Ishvara or the Personal God of the Vedanta is not absolute truth. He is relative to individual souls and the world. The same reasoning which requires the positing of an Ishvara, the Creator, Ruler and Preserver of the Universe, involves the positing of Jiva (individual souls) and the Jagat (world), it is a logical necessity. In Sri Ramakrishna's words: "As the king cannot be without courtiers, so God cannot be without devotees." Not that the Impersonal God of the Vedanta, the Satchidananda, is different from the Personal Ishvara, the same Brahman when looked upon with reference to creation is called the Ishvara, and when He is thought of in his absolute perfection apart from creation, he is the *Akhanda Satchidananda* (undivided Sat, Chit, Ananda). The same Brahman has become the triad, the Ishvara, the Jiva, and the Jagat in its

creative aspect and when Ishvara creates, he creates relative to Jivas, and not independently. Jivas therefore are of the substance of God, the difference between them is not of kind but of degree. They are all the same qualitiless, absolute Brahman and as such are one, but with reference to creation they become the triad, Ishvara, Jiva and Jagat. The difference of Upadhis (condition) which constitute the Jiva has been produced by Karma, therefore Ishvara creates relatively according to Karma. The creative activity of the Lord operates in accordance to the Karma of Jivas. One cannot argue that the diversity of Upadhis (conditions) which constitute Jivas did not exist primarily in the first creation according to which the Lord will create, the Vedantist replies that creation is conterminous with diversity which is subsumed in it. As creation is again conterminous with the conception of Time, creation is without beginning, so with the fact of creation, we are forced to assume simultaneously the play of Karma and the diversity of Jivas. It is an infinite chain, of which no beginning can be fixed in which we find Karma and diversity of conditions playing as cause and effect in an endless chain.

By the above rigorous logic, the Vedantist rebuts the argument of partiality and cruelty on the part of the Lord in the act of creating this world of diverse conditions and diverse order of beings and throws the onus on the individual. But He is there all the time helping us according to our lights. He is the Chaitanya (essence of Intelligence), the infinite ocean of Intelligence, Knowledge and Bliss, and we draw upon this reservoir, according to our needs. Upon us depend how we employ it. By employing this intelligence to break our bondage, we become the most

God-enrapture saint and by misusing that power man also becomes the most monumental villain. He is the essence of Intelligence lighting up this material world, and by the help of that Light, we live, move and have our being. He brings works to their fruition, He energises and vivifies everything. He has been compared to the rain-cloud that showers down fertilising waters but only those fields that are tilled and cultivated, turn it to advantage. Swami Vivekananda's words

are apposite to this point: "Is it the fault of Merciful Father whose wind of mercy is blowing without ceasing, whose mercy knows no decay, that some are happy and some unhappy? We make our own destiny. \* \* He neither punishes nor rewards. His infinite mercy is open to everyone. Upon us depends how we utilise it?"

Such a God meets the ends of reason and justice and reconciles human endeavour and worth to Divine Grace and Mercy.

## EPISTLES OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

( *Translated from Bengali.* )

### CXXVII.

New York  
25th September, 1894.

My Dear —

Glad to receive some letters from you. It gives me great pleasure to learn that S— and others are making a stir. We must create a stir, nothing short of this will do. You will be throwing the whole world into convulsions. —Victory to the Guru! You know, "श्रेयांसि बहुविधानि"—"Great undertakings are always fraught with many obstacles." It is these obstacles which knock and shape great characters. \* \* Is it in the power of Missionaries and people of that sort to withstand this shock? \* \* Should a fool succeed where scholars have failed? It is no go, my boy, set your mind at ease about that. In every attempt there will be one set of men who will applaud, and another who will pick holes. Go on doing your own work, what need have you to reply to any party? "सत्यमेव जयते नानृतं सत्येनैव पन्था विततो देवयानः"—"Truth alone triumphs, not falsehood. Through Truth lies the path of Devayana." \* \* Everything will come about by degrees.

Here in summer they go to the seaside,—I also did the same. They have got almost a

mania for boating and yachting. The yacht is a kind of light vessel which everyone, young and old, who has the means, possesses. They set sail in them everyday to the sea, and return home, to eat and drink and dance, —while music continues day and night. Pianos render it a botheration to stay indoors!

I shall now tell you something of the —s to whose address you direct my letters. He and his wife are an old couple, having two daughters, two nieces and a son. The son lives abroad where he earns a living. The daughters live at home. In this country relationship is through the girls. The son marries and no longer belongs to the family but the daughter's husband pays frequent visits to his father-in-law's house. They say,

'Son is son till he gets a wife

The daughter is daughter all his life.'

All the four are young and not yet married. Marriage is a very troublesome business here. In the first place one must have a husband after one's heart. Secondly, he must be a moneyed man. \* \* They will probably live unmarried; besides, they are now full of renunciation through my contact and are busy with thoughts of Brahman!

The two daughters are blondes that is, have golden hair, while the two nieces are brunettes, that is, of dark hair. They know all sorts of occupations. The nieces are not so rich, they conduct a Kindergarten school, but the daughters do not earn. Many girls of this country earn their living. Nobody depends upon others. Even millionaire's sons earn their living, but they marry and have separate establishments of their own. The daughters call me brother, and I address their mother as Mother. All my things are at their places, and they look after them, wherever I may go. Here the boys go in search of a living while quite young, and the girls are educated in the universities. So you will find that in a meeting there will be 99 per cent. of girls. The boys are nowhere in comparison with them.

There are good many spiritualists in this country. The medium is one who induces the spirit. He goes behind a screen, and out of the latter come ghosts, of all sizes and all colours. I have witnessed some cases, but they seemed to be a hoax. I shall test some more before I come to a final conclusion. Many of the spiritualists respect me.

Next comes Christian Science. They form the most influential party, now-a-days, figuring everywhere. They are spreading by leaps and bounds, and causing heart-burn to the orthodox. They are Vedantins; I mean, they have picked up a few doctrines of the Advaita and grafted them upon the Bible. And they cure diseases by proclaiming "सोऽहं सोऽहं"—"I am He! I am He!"—through strength of mind. They all admire me highly.

Now-a-days the orthodox section of this country are crying for help. 'Devil worship' † is but a thing of the past. They are mortally afraid of me and exclaim, "What a pest! Thousands of men and women follow him!

† The Orthodox Christians brand Hindus and people of other religion with this name and look upon them with scorn.

He is going to root out orthodoxy!" Well, the torch has been applied and the conflagration that has set in through the grace of the Guru, will not be put out. In course of time the bigots will have their breath knocked out of them. \* \*

The Theosophists have not much power. But they, too, are dead set against the orthodox section.

This Christian Science is exactly like our *Kartābhajā* ‡ sect: Say, "I have no disease," and you are whole; and say, "I am He"—"सोऽहं"—and you are quits,—be at large. This is a thoroughly materialistic country. The people of this Christian land will recognise religion if only you can cure diseases, work miracles, and open up avenues to money, and understands little of anything else. But there are honorable exceptions. \* \*

People here have found a new type of man in me. Even the orthodox are at their wit's end. And people are now looking up to me with an eye of reverence. Is there a greater strength than that of Brahmacharyam,—purity, my boy?

I am now busy writing a reply to the Madras Address, which was published in all the newspapers here and created a sensation. If it be cheap, I shall send it in print, but if dear, I shall send a type written copy. To you also I shall send a copy; have it published in the Indian Mirror. The unmarried girls of this country are very good and have a good deal of self-respect. \* \* These (the people) are come of Virochanā's ¶ race. To them minstering to the body is a great thing: they would trim and polish and give their whole attention to that. A thousand instruments,

‡ An offshoot of Vaishnavism during its degeneracy. They call God "Kartā" or Master and are noted for their efficiency in faith-cure.

¶ The King of the Asuras and son of the saintly Prahlada. He went to Brahmā for self-knowledge, but misunderstanding His teachings turned a materialist. (Chhândogya Upa., Chap. VIII.)

For paring nails, ten thousand for hair-cutting, and who can count the varieties of dress and toilet and perfumery? \* \* They are good-natured, kind, and truthful. All is right with them but that enjoyment is their God. It is a country where money flows like rivers, with beauty as its ripple, and learning its waves, and which roll in luxury.

"कांचन्तः कर्मणां सिद्धिं यजन्त इह देवताः ।

क्षिप्रं हि मातुषे लोके सिद्धिर्भवति कर्मजा ॥"

—"Longing for success in action, in this world, (men) worship the deities. For success is quickly attained through action in this world of man." (Gita)

Here you have a wonderful manifestation of grit and power—what strength, what practicality, and what manhood! Horses huge as elephants are drawing carriages that are as big as houses. You may take this as a specimen of gigantic proportions in other things also. Here is a manifestation of

tremendous energy. \* \* They look with veneration upon women, who play a most prominent part in their lives. Here this form of worship has attained its perfection—this is the long and short of it. But to come to the point. Well, I am almost at very wits' end to see the women of this country! They take me to the shops and everywhere, as if I were a child. They do all sorts of work—I cannot do even a sixteenth part of what they do. They are like Lakshmi (the Goddess of Fortune) in beauty, and like Saraswati (the Goddess of Learning) in virtues—they are the Divine Mother incarnate, and worshipping them, one verily attains perfection in everything. Great God! Are we to be counted among men? If I can raise a thousand such Madonnas—Incarnations of the Divine Mother in our country, before I die, I shall die in peace. Then only will your countrymen become worthy of their name. \* \*

(To be continued)

## SEEKING HIM, THE GOAL OF LIFE.

(SWAMI VISHUDDHANANDA.)

**B**LESSED indeed are those souls who have *seen* God. The highest aim of human life is to realise Him within and without. "Can God be seen?" On being asked by his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda, Sri Ramakrishna replied, "yes, He can be seen, and in a more intense way than we see the things around us." Most of us doubt the existence of God, there are few who simply believe in Him, never strive to seek Him but remain satisfied with the things of the world; and fewer still are persons who not only believe in Him but think it to be the noblest duty in life to see Him.

Our mind is naturally drawn to the sense-objects and we run after them in the hope of getting a bit of pleasure to satisfy the senses. How momentary is this sense-pleasure

and how quickly it vanishes! Sense enjoyments can never give us everlasting happiness, but on the other hand by running after them we multiply desires by thousand fold, with the result that the desires keep constantly playing upon our minds and goading us on more and more to satisfy them and are never satiated by enjoyments. Thus we bind ourselves fast to Samsāra (world). We read in the Mahābhārata that the king Yayāti had a great craving for the enjoyments of the flesh. He thought sense enjoyments to be the be-all and end-all of human existence. But being old, he could not satisfy them within the brief span of one lifetime. Desires began to sting him like scorpions and getting almost restless he at last borrowed the youth of his son in exchange for his old age to enable

him satisfy his animal [cravings. The son was so devoted to his father that he did not grudge it. Thus, the king enjoyed for long, long years the sense-pleasures, but to his great surprise, he found that he never could get to the end, that his *vāsanās* (desires) were increasing by leaps and bounds instead of being satisfied by those objects of enjoyments. Then he abdicated the throne for his son, returned the youth to him and retired to the forest to spend his last days in contemplation of God.

The lesson we derive from the above story, that desires can never be satisfied but on the other hand they increase. As the more butter we put into fire, the more it flares up. We find this also in our every-day life how the more we multiply desires and seek to satisfy them the more we are cheated by nature and never attain our object. Hence they are to be controlled. When we have been cheated by Nature a hundred times then gradually, with the awakening of Viveka (discriminative faculty) we come to subdue them more and more and fix our gaze on God.

The positive way to control these *vāsanās* is to develop faith in Him and worship Him as one dearest to us on earth. He is the mine of bliss and happiness and if we cling to Him with implicit faith, we get the bliss Divine compared with which, the pleasures of the senses are of no consequence. As this faith in Him will develop, our mind will involuntarily recede from sense-objects which will then turn stale and insipid and be concentrate in Him. We find in our lives in what an unbalanced condition our mind is; which rise into waves at the sight of every little danger and provocation and when we meet with the great miseries of life we are thrown completely off our balance. To have this faith in God is the *sine qua non* of spiritual Sādhana (practice). To stand all trials of life, to bear them with perfect equanimity without losing faith in God is the sure test of our intense faith

in Him. Such is the strength of mind of those who hold implicit faith in a merciful and wise Providence Who dispenses everything. Think of the king of devotees, Prahlād! How firm was his belief in God and what an amount of trials and tribulations he had to undergo at the hands of his cruel father. He had not for a moment lost faith in Him. How did the great Pandavas suffer! There was no end to their sufferings! They had faith adamant in the Lord and they bore them calmly. They clung to the Lord with all their might.

Now when this unshakable faith in the Lord comes, our yearning unto Him increases and then the strong desire to draw near to Him dawns upon our mind. When we are blessed with the yearning, we cannot sit idly. Can a thief remain quiet when he comes to know that a jar of gold is buried at such and such a place! Certainly not, he must have it somehow. So the devotees of God, knowing that He alone is the abode of bliss and that all desires are satisfied in Him when He is realised, cannot sit quiet but strive hard to reach Him. There are various ways to reach God and whatever means and methods a devotee may adopt he must have intense faith and attachment to Him in order to grow *spiritually*. When the thirst for God increases, the ties of Samsāra gradually drop off and we feel no longer the stings of the worldly *vāsanās*. Of course, it requires a long persistent Sādhana. In course of this spiritual practice, the subtle desires which have been stored up in our sub-conscious mind through myriads of births will forcibly drag us down to the level of Samsāra. But we shall have to take our firm stand on Sādhana, hold the weapon of Vichāra and shield ourselves with Vairāgyam (dispassion) to fight them out. The real thirst for God will not come until they are completely subdued. When we sincerely practise this spiritual Sādhana, having faith in the Lord, we find some one helping us in

our endeavour and encouraging us to reach the Ideal. In moments of dejection and depression, when we cry out unto Him, we find that He *actually* comes, consoles, counsels, entreates, saving and encouraging us in our march to Him. We then march onward with redoubled energy and get at last a glimpse of the Lord, and along with it comes the true awakening of the Soul. The spiritual life begins here! We become restless and our heart yearns after Him. When we come to this state of mind, we cannot go into the details of spiritual Sādhana. Our mind becomes possessed with Him. As the sweet smell of the lotus attracts the bees, so this vision of God draws us as it were towards Him till we finally become possessed with the bliss Divine, our beloved Lord, God. He manifests Himself to us and we see Him within and without and thus attain the goal of life.

We shall have to strive after God so long as we have the idea of "I-ness," of a separate individual in us. We shall have to exert all our energy during our spiritual Sādhana to realise Him. But when we advance in spir-

ituality we find the "puny" egoism is gradually melting away. We then place the burden of our life on Him and come to surrender ourselves completely, at His feet. So long as *we* have ourselves occupied the throne of our heart, the Lord does not manifest Himself there, but when we vacate it for Him, He shines there in all His glory and takes complete possession of our lives and guides us unerringly through this world of His Maya. Henceforward He will work and we become instrument in His hands. Living in Him all our troubles and fears will end, the disease of the world will be cured, and we shall enjoy great freedom and bliss. We shall work then but work will produce no results, we will love, but love will not bind, in a word, we shall be like the lotus leaves in the water, which the water cannot touch; naught of earth will have power over us and affect us, but our lives will be one of living-freedom, *Jivan-mukta*, moving fearlessly among the things of the world. For we will see our beloved Lord present everywhere and in everything. This resignation of one's self unto God is the goal of our life.

## SHANTI ASHRAMA DAYS.

(BY A WESTERN DISCIPLE.)

(Continued from page 112)

THE first morning, as on every morning thereafter, I was up at five o'clock and stepped forth into the crisp air ready for the bath. I faced the east and looked about on the familiar scene with affectionate eyes. Near-by canyons led away into cavernous shadows though the halo of a perfect summer's morning crested the eastern hills. I breathed deeply of the pure air heavy with the odour of tar-weed and aromatic verdurous life. Somewhat of the vitality of the primitive entered through the pores of my body, and I felt the surging of a virgin life in a land of lawless beauty unfolding into a dawn as fresh as a new-

born creation. The world I had but just left behind was as a dream forgotten. I stood related to naught save the present environment. Life sang in my veins as if consciousness were about to pierce the veil of its own mystery. The dirge of renunciation was not heard, but, rather, the resonant heart-throbs of joy as my blood leaped quicker upon a sudden extension of subjective vision. From that moment the Shanti Ashrama became a land apart from the territory just over the fence,—the same yet not the same. The surrounding country was stock range and the habitat of wild-cats, coyotes and lesser things of the wild.

The segment of the same range, called the Shanti Ashrama, was a land where the two ends of life met,—the primitive, where consciousness was masquerading behind hairy, four-legged forms and which shone through eyes glaring with the lust for blood; and the human in which the animal was getting tired of the old game of blood and war, and in which consciousness was turning inward, scanning the horizon of the mind for a glint of that life which no form can contain. The Shanti Ashrama was a land where the human was trying to snap the cord of slavery, to pierce the *maya* of bondage.

The next hour was passed in the meditation cabin with G. and the young man mentioned. The meditation cabin was a place of diversified interests: Many personalities had been there and were closely associated with the little room, each lending to it something peculiar to itself. I sat in my old position to the left of the door upon entering and directly opposite G. I looked about the room and located the place that each one of the old group had occupied. Designating them by their Sanskrit names, next to me to my left was Sankari, then Yogapriya, Haripriya, Nivritti and G.; then Swami Trigunaita, Dhira, Ujjvala, Prasuti, Utachitta (?), and Sajjana. We used to sit thus and listen to the Swami read and talk, and then we would meditate. The old times came back to me with peculiar force, and during the first hour they were all there and I could feel their distinct personalities. It was a psychological reunion, the consciousness of a spiritual bond which cannot be dissolved by the lapse of years.

The days began at five in the morning and closed at anywhere from ten to twelve at night. Though our life was routine, it was not inflexible. The ordering of the days was not arbitrarily imposed, but was the inevitable means to the full enjoyment of spiritual Sadhana. There was an hour's meditation before breakfast and two hours of reading, meditating and discussion in the forenoon. The early afternoon each spent as he choose. We met at three o'clock over lemonade in the dining room to discuss the various problems of the spiritual life and the glory of God. Full rein was given to the imagination and to individual expression. Each talked as he pleased,—now capricious and gossipy, now serious, now sceptical

and argumentative and now devotional. Again the invigorating bath after which we usually took long walks along the road to the Ashrama gate. Then came another hour's meditation before supper, which was commonly at six o'clock. Long discussions followed and then another walk along the road to the gate and finally meditation before retiring.

Many times after the last formal meditation we would talk and talk far into the night, nights of starry brilliance whose silence was broken into by the hooting of owls and the barking of coyotes. Those star-lit nights had a mystic content for the ear ready to listen. Voices of the night whose cadences sounded sharp and distinct, denoting individuality, fused into a many-toned expression of the black, brooding stillness. They were the spokesmen of the silence from which they emerged,—the snappy bark of the wild dog, the dismal hoot of the owl and the breath of the night itself breathing gently through the trees accompanied by the occasional snapping of a twig. The senses became alert and the imagination was kindled by the presence of mystery. It was a novel experience and, after a fashion, a meditation merely to sit and listen to these diverse calls from out the surrounding blackness,—a blackness so dense that it assumed to the imagination the aspect of an ominous presence unknown and unknowable, closing in on all sides, pressing as with a physical weight on the senses, crowding one into himself. Then there were moments when this din on the surface of the silence ceased to be through the awakening to subjective realities, and the encircling arms of mystery, dark and unfathomable, were forgotten.

A trivial incident disclosed to me how treacherously near the surface our cave-man instincts lie coiled. In the Ashrama was a cat. This creature was a peculiar animal having a sort of dual nature which I learned to respect from experience. She was loving and docile one moment and ferocious the next. One state would succeed the other without the slightest warning. One morning shortly after my arrival I was bestowing upon her a friendly caress in order to get properly acquainted, to her evident enjoyment when, of a sudden and without the least warning, she growled and turned on me burying her teeth and claws in my hand.

I was startled and shocked. I could not understand this conduct on the Ashrama. I looked at her in surprise as she crouched a short distance away glaring at me and threshing her tail angrily. I felt the calm, blue eyes of G. riveted upon me with an amused expression. I could see no good reason for his being amused. I was not. I essayed, what I intended to be a benignant look on my new-found enemy, and tried to act the part of one who takes all things, pleasant and otherwise, with philosophic indifference. But within was a malignant surging of the primitive. A picture unfurled before my subjective vision: My enemy and myself had a meeting outside the Ashrama compound, and our differences were then and there settled in red-corpuscle fashion. It did not take long. That cat was reduced to cat-*tanmátrás* at once; not even a hair was left to indicate that she had ever lived. The picture passed and once more I found myself looking tenderly into ferocious feline eyes. Then I bethought me of a switch which reposed in a convenient place in the dining room, and mentally reached for it with a spasm of pleasure. But that thought followed the other into the void. That switch, by the way, was one in a long series of switches which had been ruined in futile attempts to break the cat of the human trait of thievery. I am of the opinion, based on experience, that the reason that cat was not reformed was because she never felt the switch. The dishes, the table and even the larder itself got the blows intended for the cat. The way she could dodge blows carefully and stealthily aimed from behind suggested the possession of occult powers. Perhaps she was an erstwhile Yogi fallen from grace. When one switch was wrecked, another was got, this time care being taken to get it large enough to make up for past failures in the event of possible successful blow, and yet not so large as to threaten the future usefulness of the crockery. I questioned the existence of that cat on the Ashrama. Then I questioned my own existence there. Perhaps an Ashrama was originally intended for culprits. Who else would need an inclosure?

Within a few days the young man, previously referred to, left for San Francisco, and G. and I were left alone. Life became more concentrated, more incisive and with a breadth commensurate

with the increased depth. This is not said in disparagement of the third party; but is merely a statement of fact which developed in accordance with the psychologic adjustment of energies. The mystery of human relationships will ever remain a mystery. The many but touch in the passing as "ships that pass in the night, bespeak each other in passing, only a look or voice, then darkness again and a silence." The darkness and the silence are one and the event is over. Others may but touch, but the touch is momentous. Light is flashed in the contact and leaves in the passing a lustre which endures to the end. One thereby sees himself the clearer, and his vision becomes truer and deeper. We may not be able to analyse it nor do we want to. We only know that love is there and we enjoy in silence. If a meeting of this character be but once, or but a few times, the memory were a benediction. Then there are those deeper personal contacts which give to one or both the experience of a sort of subjective luminosity. The very presence of such an one is either a revolutionizing factor in the life of the other, or a fresh impetus directing his course with precision. It is as if the combination of responsive minds directed along spiritual themes reflects a super-poise which is no more the property of one than the other, but which each is conscious of and enters into according to his capacity. It gives mutual understanding even when mental processes are different.

In the aggregate many hours were spent in the meditation cabin, hours of happy association with G., listening to his readings, illuminating comments and to the wisdom of his own deep, resourceful, spiritual life. The sanctity of the Ashrama is associated, to my mind, with three personalities,—Swami Vivekananda, Swami Turiyananda and G. The spiritual character of the place and these tremendous spiritual personalities are co-existent. This association makes the Ashrama a place of pilgrimage for all time, a shrine where the mind identifying itself with the spiritual life may be drawn inward incarnations nearer the goal by the sheer force of the inspiration derived from their personalities. Being there alone with G. brought me into comradely touch with one who it seemed to me lived in the presence of God. The Ashrama, then, became a place where primitive

nature put on a finer raiment; the notes of the lark became veritable songs of joy; the rising and setting sun took on a more ethereal brilliance and conveyed a new message, and all incidents were redeemed from the commonplace by the infilling of a new life. This association also translated in a new light the traditional *Sadhanas* of the spiritual aspirant. Renunciation, which in the times gone by, had been associated with the idea of pain, unveiled and beamed with the face of joy, caressing one with the sense of luxuriant release from old confinements. The strenuous spiritual life hitherto conveying the idea of stern resistance to past rebellious tendencies became quickened into an enthusiasm in the enjoyment of which common indulgences of the old life fell away as incumbrances. "Long-faced" religion was forgotten in the awakening to the present and practical reality of spiritual ideality. It was seen that the force of ideals alone may carry one through the preparatory stages of realisation. But ideals must be invincible; then, and then only, the strenuous tests of discipline will be passed through with enthusiasm. Nay, more: the power of ideals may bear one into transcendental experiences in apparent defiance of all traditional imperatives in mental and bodily discipline. The man whom the world calls a dreamer, immersed in his dream, awakens again, not to the reality of the world, but to the reality of his dream. Those many long walks with G. throbbled with spiritual idealism. We lived on that mystic boundary separating the every-day experiences from the region of dreams. The one was not less real than the other; in fact, it was more real than the other for it endowed the other with an ethereal radiance, transforming it into an experience of enduring reality,—the trysting place of the sages and the secret retreat of God-communion.

The meditation cabin was the heart of the Ashrama. There the mind was tested, its strength, endurance and incisive power determined. There I was reminded that religion and philosophy are but hazy ideas to most students. Our common tendency is to drift along these lines of thought. We feel our way and sleep our way into this and that view and lazily ruminate on the prospect. We have more of intellectual appreciation of spiritual ideals than vital desire to embody such ideals. There is nothing strenuous in our mental action,

nothing alert and incisive in our vision. We lean on props and hobble along as best we may in our infirmity; and strive to cover up our defects, if we be so fortunate as to be aware of them, by posing, dealing in platitudes and playing to the spectacular. Has the aspirant's life been built about figures of speech? Has he been hiding behind sophistries and ethical and moral conceits? What does he really believe, and how does he believe it and why? What is the substance of his faith? Are his ayes and nays determined by some beloved personality, by reverence paid to authority, or by efficient working of his own mind in which extraneous influences and temporary vantage-points are given their proper subordinate place? Can the mind set itself to solve these and many other problems which confront the awakening mind every hour of the day? If so, then the meditation cabin with its broad vistas of spiritual life extending therefrom will become a means to the unfolding of his spiritual possibilities.

Speaking for myself, hours in the meditation cabin were not always devoted to meditation nor, for that matter, even to subjects commonly considered holy. I formally entered, formally to read and to think about things appertaining to God. The very formality of the occasion seemed to challenge the vagaries of ignoble habit. I sat in Padma posture with closed eyes and tried to drive out foreign thoughts. The stillness pounded on the ear-drums and the mind reacted to the battle-cry of rebellious tendencies. A myriad voices enticed the mind into the arena of past experiences where it was openly assaulted by old friends, unwelcome friends, whose blandishments were well-nigh irresistible. It was hard to shake old friends even though they call unbidden. They grip one with the force of perpetual obligations. So I found myself driven to appeal to the Lord from their importunities. This is the common experience of all who have given themselves over to spiritual practices. It is the resistance of old habits of thought to new mental processes. The remedy is to strengthen the ideal; that is, to become convinced to the exclusion of all logical rebellion that man is Soul, not body.

(To be concluded).

## VIVEKACHUDAMANI

( Continued from page 118. )

यद्बोद्धव्यं तवेदानीमात्मानात्मविवेचनम् ।

तदुच्यते मया सम्यक् श्रुत्वात्मन्यवधारय ॥७१॥

71. Now I am going to tell you fully about what you ought to know—the discrimination between the Self and non-Self. Listen to it and decide about it in your mind.

मज्जास्थिमेदःपलरक्तचर्म-

त्वगाह्वयेर्धातुभिरेभिरन्वितम् ।

पादोरुवक्षोभुजपृष्ठमस्तकै-

रङ्गैरुपाङ्गैरुपयुक्तमेतत् ॥७२॥

72. Composed of the seven ingredients viz., marrow, bones, fat, flesh, blood, skin, and cuticle, and consisting of the following limbs and their parts—legs, thighs the chest, arms, the back, and the head—

अहंममेति प्रथितं शरीरं

मोहास्पदं स्थूलमितीर्यते बुधैः ।

नभोनभस्वद्वहनाम्बुभूमयः

सूक्ष्माणि भूतानि भवन्ति तानि ॥७३॥

73. —This body, reputed to be the abode of the infatuation of 'I and mine,' is designated by sages as the gross body. The sky, air, fire, water and earth are subtle elements. They—

[ The sky, air etc.—These are the materials out of which the gross body has been formed. They have got two states, one subtle and the other gross.]

परस्परान्गैर्मिलितानि भूत्वा

स्थूलानि च स्थूलशरीरहेतवः ।

मात्रास्तदीया विषया भवन्ति

शब्दादयः पञ्च सुखाय भोक्तुः ॥७४॥

74. Being united with parts of one another and becoming gross (they) form the gross body. And their subtle essences

form sense-objects—the groups of five such as sound and the rest which conduce to the happiness of the experiencer, the individual soul.

[ Being united &c.—The process is as follows: Each of the five elements is divided into two parts, one of the two halves is further divided into four parts. Then each gross element is formed by the union of one-half of itself with one-eighth of each of the other four.

Subtle essences—Tanmatras.

Form sense-objects—by being received by the sense-organs.

Sound and the rest—sound, touch, smell, taste and sight.

Happiness &c.—Happiness includes its opposite, —misery also. ]

य एषु मूढा विषयेषु बद्धा

रागोरुपाशेन सुबुद्धमेन ।

आयान्ति निर्यान्त्यथ ऊर्द्धमुच्चैः

स्वकर्मदूतेन जवेन नीताः ॥७५॥

75. Those fools who are tied to these sense-objects by the stout cord of attachment, so very difficult to snap, come and depart, up and down, carried amain by the powerful emissary of one's own action.

[ Come and depart &c.—Become subject to birth and death and assume various bodies from those of angels to those of brutes, according to the merits of their work.

Powerful emissary &c.—Just as culprit seizing things not belonging to him is put in fetters and sentenced by the royal affair in various ways, so the Jiva, oblivious of his real nature, through his attachment to sense-object is subjected to various kinds of misery. ]

शब्दादिभिः पञ्चभिरेव पञ्च

पञ्चत्वमापुः स्वगुणेन बद्धाः ।

कुरङ्गमातङ्गपतङ्गमीन-

शृङ्गा नरः पञ्चभिरञ्चितः किम् ॥७६॥

76. The deer, the elephant, the moth, the fish and the black-bee—these five have died, being tied to one or other of the five senses viz., sound etc., through their own attachment. What then is in store for man who is attached to all these five!

[Their own attachment: The word 'guna' in the text means both 'a rope' and 'a tendency'.]

दोषेण तीमो विषयः कृष्णसर्पविषादपि ।

चिरं निवृन्ति भोक्तारं द्रष्टारं चक्षुषाप्ययम् ॥७७॥

77. Sense-objects are more virulent in their evil effects than the poison of the cobra even. Poison kills one who takes it, but those others kill one who even looks at them through the eyes.

[Looks at them..... eyes.—The mention of the eyes here is only typical, and implies the other sense-organs also; contact with the external world by any organ, is intended.]

विषयायामहापाशाघो विमुक्तः सुदुस्त्वजात् ।

स एव कल्पते मुक्त्यै नान्यः पद्मास्त्रवेद्यपि ॥७८॥

78. He who is free from the terrible fetters of the hankering for the sense-objects so very difficult to get rid of, is alone fit for liberation, and none else,—even though he be versed in all the six Shastras.

[Six Shastras.—The six schools of Indian philosophy are meant. Mere book-learning without the heart's yearning for emancipation will not produce any effect.]

भाषातवैराग्यवतो मुमुक्षु-

न्मर्द्यान्धपारं प्रतियानुमुद्यतान् ।

आशाग्रहो मज्जयतेऽन्तराले

निगृह्य कण्ठे विनिवर्त्य वेगात् ॥७९॥

79. Those seekers after liberation who have got only an apparent dispassion (Vairāgya) and are trying to cross the ocean of Samsāra (relative existence), the shark of hankering catches the throat and violently snatching away drowns them half-way.

[Snatching away—from the pursuit of Brahman.]

विषयाख्यग्रहो येन सुचिरकृत्यसिना हतः ।

स गच्छति सवाम्भोधः पारं प्रत्यूहवर्जितः ॥८०॥

80. He who has killed the shark known as sense-object with the sword of mature dispassion, crosses the ocean of Samsāra, free from all obstacles.

[Dispassion—Vairāgya.]

विषमविषयमार्गैर्गच्छतोऽनच्छब्दुदेः

प्रतिपदमभिधातो सृष्टुरप्येष विद्धि ।

हितसुजनयुक्त्या गच्छतः स्वस्य युक्त्या

प्रभवति फलसिद्धिः सत्यमित्येव विद्धि ॥८१॥

81. Know that death quickly overtakes the stupid man who walks along the dreadful ways of sense-pleasure, whereas one who walks in accordance with the instructions of a well-wishing and worthy Guru, as also his own reasoning, achieves his end—know this to be true.

मोक्षस्य काङ्क्षा यदि वै तवास्ति

त्यजातिदूराद्विषयानन्विषं यथा ।

पीयूषवक्षोपदयात्तुमार्जव-

प्रशान्तिदान्तीर्भज नित्यमादेरात् ॥८२॥

82. If indeed thou hast a craving for liberation shun sense-objects from a good-distance as you would do poison and always cultivate carefully the nectar-like virtues of contentment, compassion, forgiveness, straight-forwardness, calmness and self-control.

अनुक्षयं यत्परिहृत्य कृत्य-

मनाद्यविद्याकृतबन्धमोक्षणम् ।

देहः परार्थोऽयममुष्य पोषणे

यः सज्जते स स्वमनेन हन्ति ॥८३॥

83. Whoever leaves aside what should always be attempted, viz., the emancipation from the bondage of Ignorance without beginning and passionately seeks to nourish this body—which is an object for others to enjoy—commits suicide thereby.

[For others to enjoy: to be eaten by dogs and jackals after death.]

शरीरपोषणार्थं सन् य आत्मानं दिदक्षति ।

आहं दारुधियाधृत्वा नदीं तर्तुं स गच्छति ॥८४॥

84. Whoever seeks to realise the Self by devoting himself to the nourishment of the body, proceeds to cross a river by catching hold of a crocodile, mistaking it for a log.

मोह एव महामृत्युर्मुमुक्षोर्वपुरादिषु ।

मोहो विनिर्जितो येन स मुक्तिपदमर्हति ॥८५॥

85. So for a seeker after liberation the infatuation over things like the body is a dire death. He who has thoroughly conquered this deserves the state of freedom.

[ *Infatuation*.—That I am the body or that the body etc. are mine. ]

मोहं जहि महामृत्युं देहदारसुतादिषु ।

यं जित्वा मुनयो यान्ति तद्विष्णोः परमं पदम् ॥८६॥

86. Conquer the infatuation over things like the body, one's wife and children,—conquering which the sages reach that supreme state of Vishnu.

[ *Supreme state of Vishnu*.—From Rig-Veda, I. xxii. 20-21. ]

त्वङ्मांसरुधिरस्नायुर्मदोमज्जास्त्रिसंकुलम् ।

पूर्णं सूत्रपुरीषाभ्यां स्थूलं निन्द्यमिदं वपुः ॥८७॥

87. This gross body is to be deprecated for it consists of the skin, flesh, blood, arteries and veins, fat, marrow and bones, and full of other offensive things.

(To be continued.)

## STORIES OF SAINTS.

### Guru Nanak.

(1)

Guru Nanak has now begun his ministry for distributing his hard-earned jewels of spirituality among the multitude; he taught people who came to him, opened their spiritual eyes. By his flaming words of *Jnana* (knowledge) and renunciation, he awakened spirituality in multitudes of people and by his infallible blessings removed their bondages of Karma. Thus within a short time, a large number of people both Hindus and Mussulmans took refuge under him and sat at his blessed feet discarding their previous lifeless forms of religion. At this the jealousy of the priests—the *Kajis* and *Mullaks*—were roused, and burning for revenge they complained to the then reigning Nabab that Nanak Sahib had given himself out as the true worshipper of the Lord and preaching that both Hindus and Mussulmans were equal in the eyes of God; that these words of his were all make-believe intended to attract the multitude, and that the sincerity of his words would be proved only if he would join us in congregational prayer in the mosque. The Nabab thereupon invited Nanak Sahib to prayer with them in the mosque. Guru Nanak in the

ordinary way went with the Nabab and Kaji to mosque, but when the congregation had stood in a row for sometime, he suddenly left the line and retiring to a corner, sat himself down. When the *Namaj* (the congregational prayer) was finished, people appealing to the Nabab said, "Now see, your Majesty, his hypocrisy has been exposed, he is not willing to join us in prayer, although he preaches that Hindus and Mussulmans are equal in the eyes of God." When asked by the Nabab as to the reason of his leaving the prayer, the Guru Sahib said, "Whoever with undivided attention and whole heart prays to the Lord, I am with him in the prayer whether he be a Hindu or Mussulman, but whose mind is wandering and not given to the Lord in the prayer I can never be with him, whoever he may be. Here, what to speak of ordinary beings, neither the Nabab's mind was in the mosque in prayer nor that of the Kaji (the priest) but His Majesty's mind had travelled to Kabul and Kandahar and engaged in buying fine horses for his stabelry while the Kaji's mind had gone to his own home and busy in protecting the new-born colt of his mare

from falling into the well within the stable-compound. Do you call this mockery the prayer of the Lord? Is this His worship or somebody else's? How can I join such prayer? Therefore did I leave the row?" Hearing Nanak utter these true words and astonished at this disclosure of Nanak's power of being in the hearts of men, both the Nawab and Kaji ashamed at finding their thoughts laid bare, and conscious of their sacrilegious guilt, fell at the feet of the Guru Sahib and begged to be taught by him.

(2)

Guru Nanak, was so full of the true spirit of renunciation and *Pairagya*, that the following story illustrating his burning renunciation and his hatred of all earthly things and hankering after only the true bliss of spirituality, is extant among the *sadhus* of Northern India.

The Guru Sahib was then travelling about as a wandering Fakir, living on food from *bhiksha* and going about from pilgrimage to pilgrimage in the four directions whichever way his holy steps took him courting dangers, difficulties, facing starvation and even death, withal with his heart full of the sweet balm of love for the Lord and reliance on His Divine Providence. He happened to visit the pilgrimage of Hinglaj which is situated at furthest end of India on the borders of Beluchistan, and reached by a most difficultly accessible route. After visiting the holy places he came to a place where he found monks who have become the heads and abbots of big Maths, living in great luxury and ease and possessing hoards of wealth and exciting the admiration and respect of "the multitude" by their power of working miracles which they have acquired. They have also been monks who have forgotten their vows and straggling from the quest of Spirit become immersed in material wealth and with material manifestation of power such as the power of healing diseases and were content with that as their goal in life. When these Mohants or Abbots saw this young monk with beautiful face lit up with a heavenly glow and his humble mien they were much attracted to him and asked him to take his *bhiksha* (alms) from them. Nanak stood there silent and when they insisted he only said, "I do not want the ordinary *bhiksha* (alms) of food from you." "Then ask for other valued things of the world, for wealth, for posses-

sions, for land, chariots, horses, elephants, for the power of healing and working miracles and we shall grant thy prayer for the asking." Then Nanak with an air of great supplication and with tears in his eyes said, "*Kuch garibi deo maharaj*," which means "Sirs, do grant me a little of the spirit of Poverty." Struck by this anticlimax, between what they were willing profusely to give and what Nanak had asked for so suppliantly, these abbots with their minds bewildered and bated breath looked at each other and wondered who this young man must be and what must be within him which makes him discard with scorn all that man values most and welcome Poverty which everybody runs away from as a priceless treasure; and we with all our wealth and possessions and psychic powers have not the power to grant this little prayer of this begging monk. Then in the holy company of Nanak and through his grace their eyes were opened, how they have fallen from their vows and straggled from the path and become entangled in material possession and were led by the influence of Nanak to discard all wealth and material possession, and go in search of the Lord, the Essence of Spirit, and the Abode of True Bliss and Freedom.

Of the three vows which the monk takes, Poverty, chastity and obedience, he values Poverty above all the wealth and treasures of the world and as jealousy guards it as it were as a pearl of great price.

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BY THE WAY.

### A Notice.

Prof. Pramatha Nath Mukherjee's pamphlet on "Some Thoughts on Education in India" contains original reflections on the subject of Indian Education which are of great value to students of Indian culture and civilisation. During the reconstruction period of human history through which we are passing, this laying bare of the soul of a culture and emphasizing the distinctive features, are of singular interest, when the exaggerated claims of certain forms of culture are being brought to their proper light and shade and when there has been a searching of hearts and

appraising of the basic ideals of types of culture unprecedented for a long time, precipitated by the spectacle of a world-war with all its gruesome incidents in the full glare of twentieth-century civilisation. For in the comparison of cultural ideals which are sure to take place, mankind will have to pronounce its verdict on their intrinsic merits.

Two distinct ideals informing two different social and national organisations emerge to view, and the distinctiveness of their informing ideals are so well-marked in some important matters, that they have followed two different courses guiding the destiny of mankind along different channels—we mean the Indian and the European. The object of the Hindu civilisation is to guide the destinies of all who come under its fold to the high table-land of spiritual realisation of the oneness of the Soul with the Brahman the Universal Soul, through the ascending scale of social order in which life is ranged as in a ladder. This has been compassed by a great simplification of the externals of life, the forces of indiscriminate competition has been mitigated by caste system, and the path has been paved for the spiritual realisation of all. The whole force of Hindu society has been to prevent the expenditure of powers and energies in the lower, material planes of existence as little as possible and to conserve it for employment on the higher spiritual planes—so that everybody might finish his *bhoga*, enjoyment, and gather the necessary knowledge and Vairagya and make the march back from the senses and establish his home in the Spiritual Realm and once established there the power and fruition of his energising on all planes will be brought under control. This is what has been styled "Spiritual autonomy" by the writer in the pamphlet. When this is recognised as the ultimate goal in Hindu civilisation, everything forms of a piece with it, its social order, its manner, customs, all fall in their natural place, as feeder strains to the main current.

The author has gone to some lengths and detail in framing what may be called a constitution i. e. planning beforehand a scheme worked out in some detail as to how the education system are to be staffed, managed. We must confess we have great misgivings, of all worked-

out schemes of collective life planned decades ahead, in which all the *minutæ* of detail are laid out and social life is thereby virtually dictated to a pre-worked-out scheme. But by this we do not mean to exclude consideration of the ideals underlying the institutions of a culture and its bearing with regard to each other, its adjustment to other cultures which surround it as the author has done in the major part of the pamphlet. We do not believe that well-being lies in that; but the true revivalist work confines itself to revealing and intensifying the soul of the people, and leave them to work it out; for it is extremely venturesome to assert, what new forms of expression, what undreamt-of application the revived soul of a people will find in new environmental conditions. We believe we are fortified in these reflections by the authority of Swami Vivekananda who never cared to build elaborate plans for the future, but revealed the soul of the people and emphasised it with all the force at his command and given their lost individuality, he believed they would stand up in their strength, self-conscious, self-reliant, and taking their destiny in hand, will work out their own salvation. Therefore the first step to be hewn out of the rock of ages, according to him, is to flood the land with spiritual ideas, throw the inestimable jewels of spirituality enshrined in our scriptures and practicalised in the lives of a long succession of religious personages broadcast over the length and breadth of the land. He had the genius to foresee also that nothing will send such galvanic shock of strength through the mass of people, as these spiritual ideals to which they are constitutionally bound to respond energetically.

Before the awakened power of the Spirit of the people all that stands in the way of its self-realisation will vanish without the necessity of our cursing or villifying this particular custom or that. All the precautions then that finds in our author's constitution-making as safeguards against the disruptive influence of an alien culture, will have no meaning then. For the strength of a culture will be enhanced not by the ingenuity, number or rigidity of the barriers which protect it, but its intrinsic, inherent strength which will help it to meet all cultures face to face, and then the revitalised culture may be left to itself to hold its own, and to assimilate and absorb, according to its needs. The

mass of restrictions which gird round our social structure, however necessary as a transitional protective measure, certainly do not argue its strength, but it may be safely surmised that with the accession of strength in the internal organism they will fall away or diminish of themselves. But both the premature pulling down of these or the endeavour to rivet them tighter, or multiplying them with the false hope of giving added strength to the body is equally mischievous and will only tend to weaken it.

What Prof. Mukhopadhyaya says with regard to the principle of education, we find ourselves in full agreement. Education should not merely supply with one a mass of information which he hardly knows how to assimilate, or manage. Before the information is collected, or along with it the mind should pass through a rigorous course of concentration by which the mind should learn how to tackle facts, how to hold them in mind for a long time and compare and think on them. This practice of formal concentration forms an integral and important part of our Hindu system of education, where the Brahmin student practices concentration every day as part of his religious duties. When he has learnt concentration he can collect facts at will and such a trained mind put upon anything will evolve marvellous results out of it.

When the Professor speaks of men and women as playing different roles in life and polarity of man and woman being an expression of the gist of existence, we also agree and no education which does not educate her in the line of her peculiar development and seeks only to approximate her to the state, mentality, qualities of men at the sacrifice of her female qualities is foredoomed to failure, especially in this country. All woman should be educated to the approximation of that noble type of womanhood immortalised in our Epics in the noble character of Sri Sita Devi, great in great reserves of silent power of purity, devotion and self-effacement and the calm dignity born of the infinite power of love and peace and self-sacrifice instinctively commanding the homage of all men.

The author has rightly emphasised the need of Brahmacharya in our educational system, which has always commanded a dictatorial position in our

Hindu system. With the assimilation of Brahmacharya in the system, the almost preponderating dependence on physical food and "nerve-tonics and medicines" for the nourishment strengthening of body and mind will be curtailed enormously, for it is not "bread and butter and milk," so prominently nourish and invigorate the mind and body as Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is the real tonic and nourisher *par excellence* and once established in it even the least food, both in kind and quality will give marvellous results, for then the energy born of food will all be retained, transmuted into thoughts, and employed, as the higher powers, instead of being dissipated as sex-thoughts and imaginings. The consciousness of great "Ojas" and vigour of brain and the release from a predominant dependence upon what is called "good" food, is experienced by all Sadhus and others, who go in for *akhand* (unbroken) Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya gives great tone to the physical body, releases it greatly from the *dwanda* (duality) of heat and cold, physical pain and pleasure and infinitely enhances its powers of suffering privations and resisting disease. Brahmacharya forms a cornerstone of our culture and it seems possible to revive its basis among large numbers as it is ingrained in our system.

The author shows great depth of thought and ingenuity in exposing some of the basic ideals and general principles underlying the Hindu system of culture, and is replete with reflections which are attractive both by their originality and ingenuity and its nicety of presentment. We could hardly do justice to all the matters discussed in this interesting pamphlet, within the short space of this notice but we have much pleasure in saying that we have both enjoyed and profited by the perusal of this thoughtful article. The place where the author presents his statement of the two plans of adaptation, the indoor and outdoor, of the two types of culture, the introspective and inwardly directed culture (*Antarmukha*) of the East and the objective and outwardly directed (*Bahirmukha*) culture of the West is very fine as it brings out their respective merits. We give the quotation:—

"I may briefly characterise the contrast between the two plans of adaptation—out-door and in-door—as I may call them respectively.

The direction of the former plan is indicated by the common formula—adaptation of the self to the environment. Here the main current of energy is allowed to flow outwards; alertness or readiness to react becomes the prime virtue. Thus instead of primarily conserving and developing his own constitutional energy, man allows himself to dissipate in endless reactions against endless external stimuli, misconceiving the importance of such desultory and eccentric exercise. He wrongly thinks that energy can be best developed by such occupation and exercise alone, that energy is a commodity that must be gathered abroad and brought home in the shape of food, fellowship, books, lectures and newspapers; he hardly suspects that every cell—nay, every atom—of his body is a magazine of stored-up energy of incalculable magnitude, indeed a centre where energy considered both in its kinetic and potential forms is simply equal to the *whole* Cosmic Power which this universe is. The nature of the outdoor plan is this: preserve and develop the body by food and "running" exercise, and by straining every nerve to purge the surroundings of the myriads of visible and invisible foes that would bring disease, suffering and death to us, by not only keeping our powder always dry but always exchanging shots with our natural or artificial energies—this indeed is life perpetually on the war-path, a life-long living in the trenches. In grappling with disease for instance it produces its horrible prescriptions of disinfectants, medicines and the so-called preventive measures. The plan of building up the mind is also similar from this point of view. It begins by assuming that the mind is practically a "*tabula rasa*" at the start, and that therefore the gathering of experience, the building up of will and character, is mainly an outdoor business, a matter of accumulating and arranging impressions. The self therefore grows by accretion and epigenesis and not by unfolding and evolution. The correct method is observation, and analysis and not intuition. The will and character again must be formed in the continual putting forth of effort to parry off the blows aimed at us from outside—in the seeking of prey and warding off enemy, to translate the whole affair into biological terms. We are all familiar with the nature and consequences of this plan of life.

The formula of the latter plan of adaptation is the converse of that of the former—adaptation of the environment to the self. The self recognises and is bent upon realizing its own highest potentialities, its ideals; it proceeds to adapt the environments to the needs of this process of self-fulfilment, to conform the outer to the rule and standard of the inner. This shows that it is not a plan of ignoring and neglecting the outer, but that of making it serviceable in the best possible manner to the conservation and concentration of energy within, by which act alone can the potentialities of our nature be realised in a measure worthy of the cost of the attempt. The classical example is what is depicted by Kalidasa: the great god Mahadeva absorbed in deep meditation in his favourite haunt, the mount Kailasa; and Nandi, the rod of authority in hand, conforming Nature, living and non-living, to the tune and repose and depth of his master's great meditation. This is the symbol of spiritual as distinguished from merely animal adaptation. The principal features of this in-door method should be noted thus: (1) Its vital philosophy, viz. that the body is not a mass of inert "particles" governed only by Newton's laws of motion but a mass of centres or stores of energy, partly kinetic but vastly potential, which by the regulation of vital metabolism and sense-activity should be rendered a maximum kinetic force; that the external stimuli should only assist this internal *release* or awakening of power (it should be noted that I am using these terms of dynamical science in somewhat rough senses). Its spiritual philosophy, viz., that the mind of the child far from being a *tabula rasa* or simply a store of vague hereditary disposition, is a centre through which the whole universal stress is operating and overflowing, so that at the back of the poor child's will we have the whole cosmic power given and awaiting—Mahashakti or the Mother of the world Herself. The key to the hidden sources of power, knowledge and happiness is to be found therefore not in outer observation, running exercise and externally directed gratification, but in intuition culminating in *dhyana* and *samadhi* which outer observation may suggest and assist but not distract; in the concentration of the will-power preferably upon internal centres of force culminating in what is technically known in the science of *Yoga* as

*gamyama* which motor exercise may assist and safe-guard but not dissipate (e. g., a form of breathing exercise called *pranayama*); and in the quieting of the passions, in the subsidence of the distracting shadows or chimeras of pleasures so that the self may fall back upon its own substratum which is love, sweetness and bliss (*prema* and *ananda*), and the external gratification of the self—induced by external causes and referring to external objects—must be such as to tend to this consummation."

## REVIEWS.

*Brahmadarsana or intuition of the Absolute*, being a introduction to the study of Hindu philosophy, by Sri Ananda Acharya. Published by Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London. Size 7½ by 5 inches.

This little book embodies a series of lectures delivered in Norway by Sri Ananda Acharya who has been doing Vedanta-propagation work in England. This book represents an attempt to present the ideas and conceptions of Hindu philosophy to the students of Vedanta philosophy in the West. The difficulties besetting one who attempts to render the unfamiliar terms and ideas of Indian philosophy to Western mind in a form to make them acceptable to the religious mind of the West is great; and the writer is to be congratulated on the apparent ease and attractiveness with which he has succeeded in presenting the abstruse and recondite conclusions and the lines of argument of Hindu philosophies in a terse, luminous and attractive garb. These lectures on some of the deep problems of Indian philosophy are a little scrappy, but they do not pretend to be a systematic treatise; but we would have been gladder if the author had gone to greater lengths in bringing out some of the essential differences between the conclusions of Indian and Western philosophy and the difference of outlook resulting therefrom; and we are conscious of the limitations imposed on him by the circumstances in which these lectures were delivered. But as an easy presentment of an array of conclusions and lines of argument of some of the most important problems of the systems of

Indian philosophy, we have no hesitation in saying that these lectures, scrappy and insufficient though they be to some extent, form a good introduction to students of Indian philosophy in the West.

*Life of Ranoji Rao Scindhia* (Founder of the Gwalior State) by Mukund Wamanrao Burway, Judge, Small Cause Court, Indore. Size 5 by 7 inches.

This is a short and well-written life of the famous lieutenant of Baji Ravi Peshwa—who built and consolidated the Maharatta empire during the period of decadence of Moghul Empire. The life achievements, exploits and conquests of Baji Rao Peshwa, perhaps one of the greatest personalities of the Maharatta period, second only to Sivaji whom Ranoji Rao served faithfully as a lieutenant in his exploits, is given at some length. In return for his loyal and faithful services, Ranoji Rao had the Jhagir conferred on him by the Peshwa, and he became the founder of the present Gwalior State. The writer has written the lives of the Maharatta heroes appreciatively and he has helped to dispel some aspersions on their character by reference to Indian and European sources. It is interesting to note that as Sri Samarath Ramdas Swami inspired the life and activities of Sivaji, the life of Baji Rao Peshwa was under the inspiring and chastening influence of Sri Brahmendra Swami of Dhawadshi.

*Biochemistry*. Published by J. P. Pandit & Co., Bhutedi, Zampa, Baroda. Price Rs. 2. Size 5 by 8 inches.

This is a book on the new system of treatment started by Dr. Schuster and since taken on by some eminent physicans of America and Europe, the principle of treatment which is called that of tissue remedy is the natural one—that the inorganic cell-salts which along with water and organic matter constitutes the human body, are the real cell, and tissue builder, which use the other constituents for building cells and tissues; when these cell-salts are deficient disease sets in and the proper treatment is to supply the deficiencies of the cell-salts and help nature to cure herself through the blood by supplying deficiencies. The originators and supporters also claim that the efficiency of drugging like in allopathy with powerful agents or the law of

*similia similibus curantur* in Homœopathy is conditioned greatly by the power of the human organism in building cell-tissues by the inorganic cell-salts and the best way is helping nature by restoring the cell-salts to normal portions. Biochemic system employ only 12 remedies corresponding to the twelve tissue or cell-salts. In this book the application of the twelve remedies to various diseases is given in some detail.

We have no experience of this treatment but the testimonials of Biochemistry appended with this book include from some doctors who claim grand results have been obtained in practice. The price of the remedies is also cheap, one box of 1 oz. powders of the 12 remedies of potency  $3 \times 6 \times 72 \times$  costing Rs. 10 only. J. P. Pandit & Co., Baroda.

## NEWS AND NOTES.

WE have received the report of Ramkrishna Mission Sevashrama, Kankhal for the month of April 1918. Indoor patients: There were 6 old cases, and 21 new admitted, 15 discharged cured, 4 died, 1 left treatment. Outdoor patients: There were 2260 cases of which 1029 new and 1231 repeated numbers.

Balance of the last month ...	Rs. 5253-10-9
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Total Receipts ...	Rs. 347-14-0
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Total ...	Rs. 5601-8-9
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Total Disbursements ..	610-13-9
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Balance in hand	Rs. 4990-11-0
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The Swami in charge writes to us to say that the income of the Sevashrama has decreased owing to the war and the expenses are rising on account of the high prices prevailing especially of medicine and cloth, and he appeals to the generous public on whose support the Ashrama works to augment its help and encouragement.

THE 83rd Birthday celebration of Bhagavān Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was held in Mercara, Mysore, on Sunday the 7th April 1918 by the members of the Vedanta Society helped by the generous public. The occasion was graced by the presence of His Holiness Swami Nirmalanandaji,

a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa. On the arrival of His Holiness he was greeted by the people who prostrated at his holy feet and after being garlanded drove through the crowded streets to the Omkareshwar Temple Hall where he was put up during his sojourn in Mercara. Till the 11th April when the Swamiji left this place for Travancore to supervise the Mission work that is being done there, the Swamiji held religious discourses both morning and evening which were very illuminating and religious doubts cleared in these class-talks. On the day of celebration a large photo of Sri Ramakrishna was placed in a beautifully decorated *mandapam* and the Bhajana party started at 8 a. m. with this *mandapam* from the Central High School Hall. It was a grand sight to see—the centre of attraction being the Swami Nirmalanandaji who walked in front of the *mandapam*. The progress of procession was very slow owing to the offerings of fruits and flowers with *aratrikam* almost at every step. At about 1 p. m. the party returned to the place of starting. When the procession came to its destination, some three hundred poor 'Narayanans' were provided with food and sumptuously fed. A *harikatha* recital was made by a Brahmin devotee as an act of devotion. On being called upon by Rao Bahadur K. Appayya, Retired Assistant Commissioner who presided on the occasion, Mr. C. M. Rama Rao, B. A., L. T., gave a short discourse on the Life and Teachings of Gurumaharaj. The lecture was, though brief, very clear and impressive, the important points in the Life and Teachings of the world Teacher of the modern age being touched upon at full length. At the earnest request of the audience the Swamiji made a short and impressive speech. The gist of it was that Bhagavān Sri Ramakrishna came to the world to make mankind understand that all religions were so many roads leading to the same goal, that there need not be any quarrel or fight between any two religions. After Swamiji's speech 'mangalathy' was made, Prasad was distributed and the function came to a close.

WE have received the following:—

The Dacca Branch of the Ramkrishna Mission started a Free School in November 1214 with the object of diffusing education among poor and

neglected classes irrespective of caste, creed or colour, so that they may intelligently and honestly earn their livelihood. At first there were only 22 students in the School and an Infant Class was only opened but the number of students has risen to 125 and the standard of the School is at present up to Class IV of the Calcutta University School Curriculum. Much of the education in India has ever been under monastic control which served a two-fold purpose, first in putting before the young the true ideal of education and secondly in moulding their moral and spiritual life. And with this end in view the School has been placed under the conduct of the Brahmachari monastic members of the Mission, and moral and spiritual training have been adapted as a part of the General Curriculum. To provide for the poor classes, whose first need is the earning of their daily bread, the authorities have in mind a plan to open some lines of technical education for giving the boys practical training in agriculture, carpentry and other cottage industries and the like, which remain as yet unattempted, so to say, solely for want of resources. In short, pure national culture is what the School aims at. In the circumstances may not this institution be deserving of the sympathy and patronage of the benevolent and patriotic sons of India?

On the 10th May 1918, there was gathering of some respectable gentlemen of the locality and the guardians and tutors of the students reading in the School on the occasion of its prize distribution ceremony. A report of the School from its start up till now was read and there were some recitations from the classics. The President then gave away the prizes and the meeting dispersed.

THE eighty-third birthday anniversary of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa was celebrated at the Ramakrishna Mutt, Vaniyambadi, Madras, on the 19th May 1918 with great *elal*. The Mutt hall was tastefully decorated and on a specially erected wooden altar was seated a big life-like picture of Sri Ramakrishna. Many *Bhajana* parties arrived, amongst whom was one Panduranga Bhajana party from Barukur, their *Bahavada nartanam* (ecstatic dances) with the procession, of Sri Gurumaharaj's Vimanam were much appreciated by the assembled *bhaktas*, for their ecstatic fervour of

devotion. The feeding of the poor was a feature of the occasion and about 1500 poor "narayans" were fed. Students of several school assembled and made devotional recitals before the altar of Sri Ramakrishna, followed by the playing of a Dramatic Act in "Barathakatha" by The Ramakrishna School boys which created an intensely devotional atmosphere among the assembled devotees. Heavy rain for some time hindered the festivities of the occasion. The hall was filled with merchants, landlords, mirasaders and others and secretaries and members of branch societies at Periapet, Ambanpet, Nattarampalli, Mettor and Ambar. Letters were read including one from the Raja of Ramnad wishing the ceremony all success. Mr. Krishnaswamy Iyer B. A. delivered a lecture on Sri Ramakrishna's life and teachings, followed by C. Venkataswamy Naidu, the President of the Math. He said that the teaching of Sri Ramakrishna was the re-statement of the old Sanatan Dharma and that he had lived amongst men and demonstrated the possibility of obtaining complete control over oneself and concentrating one's mind on God. There were rejoicings the whole night. With *mangalarathy* and distribution of *prasad*, the proceeding terminated.

WE have received the fourth annual report of the Vivekananda Society, Tallamangalam, Cochin. The Society has a Library and Reading Room, a Poor Fund, meetings are organised in which religious, social and philanthropic subjects are discussed. The Society fed poor Nayadus on the last Onam Day, and celebrated the 56th birthday anniversary of Swami Vivekananda in a fitting manner. We wish the Society all success.

THE monthly report of the R. K. Mission Sevashrama, Brindaban for the month of April 1918:—  
Indoor patients: There were 8 old cases and 8 new admitted of which 8 discharged cured, 2 left treatment, 1 died and 5 still under treatment.  
Outdoor patients: There were 3161 cases of which 677 new and 2484 were their repeated numbers.  
Summary of accounts: Receipts, subscriptions and Donations etc. Rs. 445-5-0. Expenditure for Seva and Building Fund Rs. 310-14-3.